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THE "A.L."

No. 211.
(Second Edition.)

BRIGHT STORY READERS.

Grade I.

The Magic Spectacles
and
The Little Brown Man of the Hills.

By SARAH J. TOMKINS.

Printed in England.

361

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THE "A.L." BRIGHT STORY READERS.

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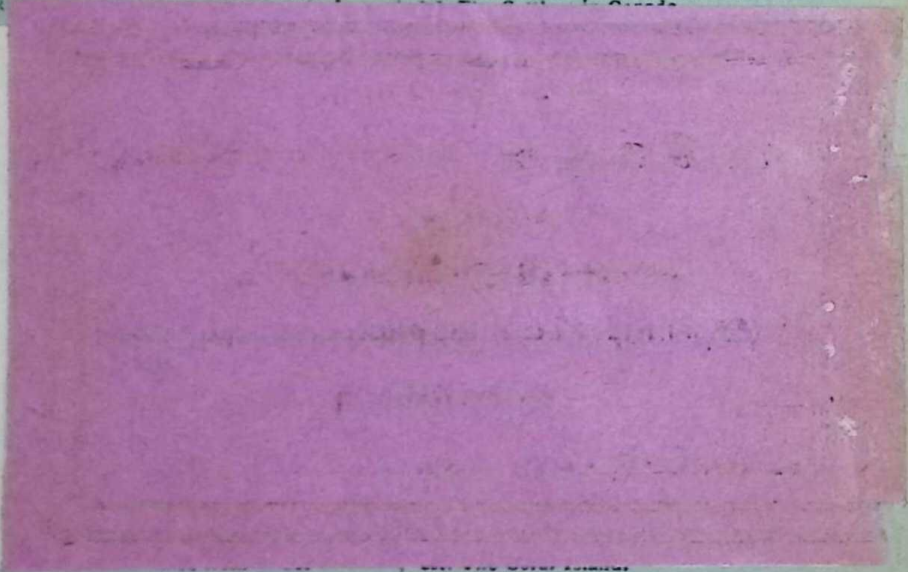

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THE MAGIC SPECTACLES.

492

JACK and Jill went up the hill, but not to fetch a pail of water; they went up the hill, on their way to the well-known heath, that was situated about two miles from their home.

2. Crowds of other children—some with their fathers, some with their mothers; some with both parents, and some with no parents—were all bent on the same errand, a day's fun on the heath.

3. It was Whit-Monday, a great holiday; and many of the boys were carrying toy boats, some large, and others small, some with sails, but many without, to float on the large pond near the middle of the heath.

4. Jack carried his little boat with sails, and Jill her baby doll. He was longing to see how his boat would look sailing on the pond; for it was the first time he had been so far from home since Christmas, when Santa Claus had brought him this welcome gift.

5. On arriving at the heath, the two children walked straight to the pond; for Jill was almost as anxious as Jack to see the beautiful little boat floating on the lake.

6. The sun was shining brightly, and the many

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boats made a very pretty picture, as they sailed away over the water. Jack and Jill were sure that no other boat looked quite as fine as theirs did; and, for a time, they were well satisfied to play as the other children were doing.

7. But as they had had a very long walk, they at last became very hungry and tired; so they threw themselves down on the grass, ate their lunch, and Jack was soon fast asleep.

8. Jill, like the little mother that she was, would not give way, although she too was tired, and the fresh, buoyant air had made her drowsy. She amused herself with her doll for quite an hour.

9. When at last Jack opened his eyes and jumped to his feet, he said, "Jill, do you believe there are *really* and *truly* any fairies?"

10. "Yes, of course, I do; but they only come out in the night, when we are all asleep."

"But why do they come out at night?" said Jack.

"They are afraid of us, because they are so tiny and we are so big," was her reply.

11. "I wonder!" exclaimed Jack.

"Mother says that many clever people believe in them, but that *we* do not, because we do not try to understand them," said his sister.

12. "Would you like to see one, Jill?"

"Rather! Would you?"

"I should love it! But how, and when?"

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"Shall I tell you a secret?" said Jill.

"Of course you may," replied her brother. "I promise not to tell anybody."

13. "Well, old Micky says he has seen them often and often, and that they love boys with blue eyes and flaxen hair," said Jill.

14. Jack's eyes opened wide, and after a moment's thought he said, "Well, *I* have blue eyes and flaxen hair."

"Yes! They would love you," replied his sister.

"But I am seven years old and have never seen one yet," sadly remarked Jack.

15. "Oh! I wish I had blue eyes; but mine are grey, dull grey," said his sister.

"And besides, you are only a girl," was the proud reply.

16. "Micky says that they dress in purple, and hide under violets in spring, foxgloves in summer, heather in autumn, and amongst the mistletoe that clings round the apple trees in winter."

17. So talked these two little children; and you must bear in mind that the boy was but seven, and the girl only ten years of age.

18. By this time, the afternoon was drawing to a close, so they gathered up their belongings and set out for home. Their mother was very glad to fold them again in her arms, kiss them good-night, and pack them off to bed.

19. Jack was a dreamer. Not only at night did he dream, but often in the daytime his mother

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would find him sitting with his blue eyes wide open, and staring, as it seemed, at nothing.

Of what was he dreaming?

He was dreaming of the fairies, which he had talked about on the heath.

20. Since then, he had paid a visit to the old man named Micky, to ask him when and where he had seen the fairies; and the old gentleman had said, "You have not got the right kind of spectacles on, my boy." But he would say no more.

21. Jack pondered over these words; he could not understand them at all, but was too proud to go to his old friend again, to ask him their meaning.

22. One day in late summer, Jack was strolling home from school, when his eyes caught sight of a card in a shop window, and he read as follows:—

SPECTACLES FOR SECOND SIGHT.
ENQUIRE WITHIN.

23. He opened the door of the shop, went up to the counter, and asked, "Will you, please, tell me how much a pair of those spectacles will cost?"

24. "You can get them as low as half a crown," said the man, looking at Jack with a merry twinkle in his eye.

"Thank you, Sir," said Jack, who then turned and walked out of the shop.

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25. Now, he had just this sum of money in his money box; so he decided that, next day, he would possess a pair of the much coveted spectacles.

26. Next day, when Jack presented himself with his half-crown, the old man said,

"Take care of them. Put them carefully away, until the old moon dies."

* * * * * *

27. It was a lovely night early in September. Little Jack had gone to bed and had slept soundly. Towards morning he awoke with a start; and though he tried and tried, he could not go to sleep again.

28. So he jumped up and peeped out. The old moon was lying on its back, as though waiting for the sun; and near it, as if on guard, was the biggest and brightest star Jack had ever seen. Not a sound was to be heard. All nature was asleep; even the birds were at rest in their cosy nests.

29. "Now!" thought Jack. "I wonder if the fairies are about. Perhaps they are lurking somewhere not far away; perhaps under the ivy leaves in our little front garden."

30. A faint twitter of a bird was heard. The sun was coming, and the old moon was gradually fading away, not to be seen again until the sun had done his work and sunk to rest in the western sky.

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31. So Jack went back to bed, but not to sleep. "To-morrow night," said he to himself, "I will steal out of the house, when they are all asleep, and see if it is true that at night the fairies dance and sing."

32. Next evening, Jack said good-night to his mother and went to bed. He heard the clock strike ten, eleven, then twelve. He jumped out of bed, put on his clothes, and slipped very quietly downstairs and out of the front door, which had only been bolted.

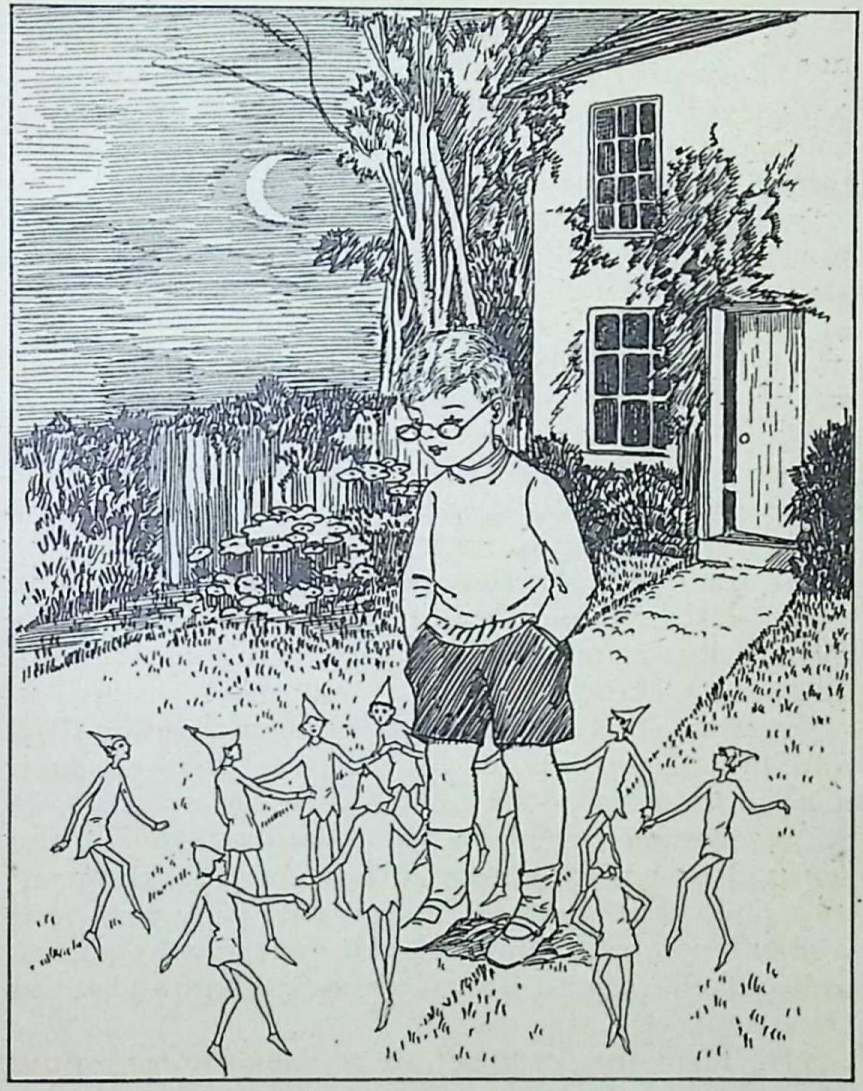
33. He walked down the garden path; but, before he reached the gate, he heard a strange voice saying in his ear, "Get your spectacles, little boy, and be quick!"

34. Jack was startled, but bravely slipped back, crept upstairs, and returned with the spectacles. When he again neared the gate, the same small voice said, "Put them on, Jack."

35. So he fixed them on with some difficulty; and then, Oh! wonder of wonders! he had such a sight that he could not believe his eyes.

36. Eleven tiny men stood before him. They were dressed in green, and were sparkling all over like frost in the moonlight. They danced and skipped round him eleven times, and laughed and talked, though he could not understand what they said.

37. Then the leader of them spoke to him quite plainly, saying, "Open the gate, little boy."



'They danced and skipped round him eleven times.'—*Page* 6.

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On the pavement Jack saw a very small aeroplane, just large enough to hold one little boy.

38. "Get in," the elf told him.

"But I don't know how to use it," replied Jack rather nervously.

"Get in, and I will be with you," said the little man.

39. Thereupon Jack jumped in; and no sooner had the tiny elf sprung in beside him, than the plane circled round and round, then flew up and up until it was right above the houses.

40. As they soared through the air, Jack asked, "Where are the other little men?"

"Oh, they are flying with us," was the reply.

"Where are you taking me?" he then enquired.

"To our home on the heath. This is our night of revelry, and we want you to be with us."

41. In a very short time, Jack felt the plane descending, and then it touched the ground.

"Now, jump out, little boy, and welcome to our fairy home," said the elf.

42. With that, he blew on a tiny horn; and, coming as though from nowhere, eleven beautiful fairies, all dressed in violet, danced before them.

43. Each fairy ran to her own little man, and then the eleven pairs danced eleven times round Jack, singing

"Follow, follow, follow, follow,
Follow us to fairyland."

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44. "Is it far?" said Jack.

"No, not far. Over some trees, and over some hedges, we on the bat's back, you in the plane, and we shall reach the cradles where we sleep."

45. Just then, Jack heard the flapping of many wings, and down from some trees flew eleven small black bats. Each fairy and her mate skipped on to the back of a bat; and up they flew, singing

"Follow, follow, follow, follow,
Follow to the fairy dell."

46. Jack jumped into his little car, and it immediately rose into the air.

They flew over hedges and ditches, and over trees clad in their autumn garb, till they came to a small pond glistening in the moonlight.

47. On the surface of the pond floated water-lilies; so the bats lowered their flight until they touched the petals of these floating flowers.

48. Jack's plane found a resting place on a large stone in the pond; and the bats were hovering over the water-lilies. After resting a few minutes, they once more resumed their journey, until they came to a mossy meadow.

49. The fairies alighted, joined hands and once more danced round Jack, singing

"Welcome! Here the fairy treads,
Where harebells bend their graceful heads."

50. One fairy, who was even more beautiful than the rest, and seemed to be the princess of

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this band, in a voice that rang out like a note of wonderful music on the still night air, called, "Hither, to us! Hither."

51. At the words, eleven tiny men, dressed in brown, advanced towards them. These were the fairies' servants, and each had a foxglove bell on his head.

52. The foremost of these little brown elves balanced an extra pink flower-bell on his small right hand. This he laid at the feet of the princess, together with the cup which he carried on his head and which he had brought for her.

53. The princess lifted the twelfth cup from the ground, tripped up to Jack, and said, "Sip this."

"Is it dew?" asked Jack.

"No, it is nectar, which the bees gather for us from the heather bells," she told him.

54. Each of the other little serving men then laid his burden at the feet of his own fairy mistress, bowed to her, and withdrew.

55. Jack raised his cup to his lips, and at once all the eleven fairies followed his example, looked at Jack, slightly bent their heads, and sipped the nectar. Jack thought he had never tasted anything so delicious; it was much nicer than the bee wine his mother gave him at Christmas.

56. Then each dainty fairy handed her cup to her own tiny elf, who also bowed to Jack, then sipped the wine, and Jack was nothing loth to do the same.

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57. After having emptied the wine cups, the fairies threw them on the ground. Each elf then caught his own little partner round the waist, and once more they whirled round Jack.

58. Their voices were so sweet, and Jack was so cheered with the nectar, that he asked himself, "Am I in Paradise?"

59. Suddenly he saw in the distance eleven pairs of great shining eyes, all of which seemed to be coming towards them, and he heard the croaking of many frogs. They soon surrounded the fairy circle, their great eyes shining like precious jewels in their heads.

60. Having reached the outside of the circle, they seemed to rest for a minute; then, to Jack's great surprise, the little dancers jumped on to the flat backs of the eleven frogs, and, at a signal from the prince of the elves, there followed the strangest game of leap-frog that Jack had ever seen, or could have ever imagined.

61. Strange to say, these frogs seemed to enter entirely into the fun; and the peals of laughter from the fairies, as they leapt into the air and then nimbly alighted on the ground, filled Jack with envy, and he wished—oh, *how* he wished!—that he might be one of them.

62. Suddenly the dancing stopped; and, in the twinkling of an eye, the eleven frogs appeared to have sunk into the ground, leaving the fairies standing on the greensward.

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63. "Close your eyes, Jack," said the princess; and Jack immediately did as he was told.

"Now open them, Jack," she told him; this command Jack was only too ready to obey.

What do you suppose he saw now?

64. He saw that he was standing in the centre of eleven tiny boats, like those that go round and round to the strains of an organ, at the shows, on Bank Holidays.

65. These boats were painted gold and white, and were covered with the tiniest electric lights, showing all the colours of the rainbow.

66. When Jack turned round to gaze in wonder at this transformation scene, he was surprised to count twelve—not eleven—boats; and he felt sure that this time he was to join in the revels.

67. Beside him stood seven of the quaintest little men, all dressed in red and green. Each man was tuning up his own particular musical instrument; one had a pipe, two had each a flute, one a harp, one a tambourine, one had bones, and last, but not least, one held a drum.

68. This tuning-up made an unpleasant din; and Jack felt inclined to clap his hands to his ears to shut out the noise, but, being a well-behaved little boy, he did not do so.

69. Then the fairy princess advanced towards him, saying, "Now, Jack, you must join our fun. This is *your* boat." And before he could ask her how it was to contain him, it had grown into a

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boat just his size, not an inch too large nor an inch too small; and it was one blaze of electric light. He sprang into it, as the fairies did into theirs; then the band struck up a lively measure, and off they went full swing on this amazing roundabout.

70. Now, Jack had spent many pennies on rides at the shows that sometimes visited his heath, but never had he enjoyed such a glorious adventure. Round and round they went to the strains of the band, which now played very nicely, the fairies laughing gaily all the time. Then the music slowed down, at last ceased, and all was still.

71. "Are you tired yet, Jack?" asked the princess.

"Oh no, not yet!" he replied. "Can we have another ride? Just *one* more!" he entreated.

With that the band struck up another lively tune, and off went the whirligig, full pelt again.

72. When at last it slowed down once more and the music ceased, they all jumped on to the grass. Jack felt so giddy he could hardly stand.

73. Day was breaking; and the princess danced up to Jack singing,

"Day is breaking, mortals are waking;
We must away, no longer we stay."

After which she remarked, "Little boy, you are tired, and it is time for you to get back to your nice little bed."

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74. The fairy prince jumped into the tiny aeroplane, which was immediately one mass of light; and Jack followed, after bidding the princess good-bye. They were soon flying again over hedges and ditches, then over the tops of the houses, until they came to Jack's home.

75. There the fairy prince alighted, and Jack sprang out; then the prince said to him,

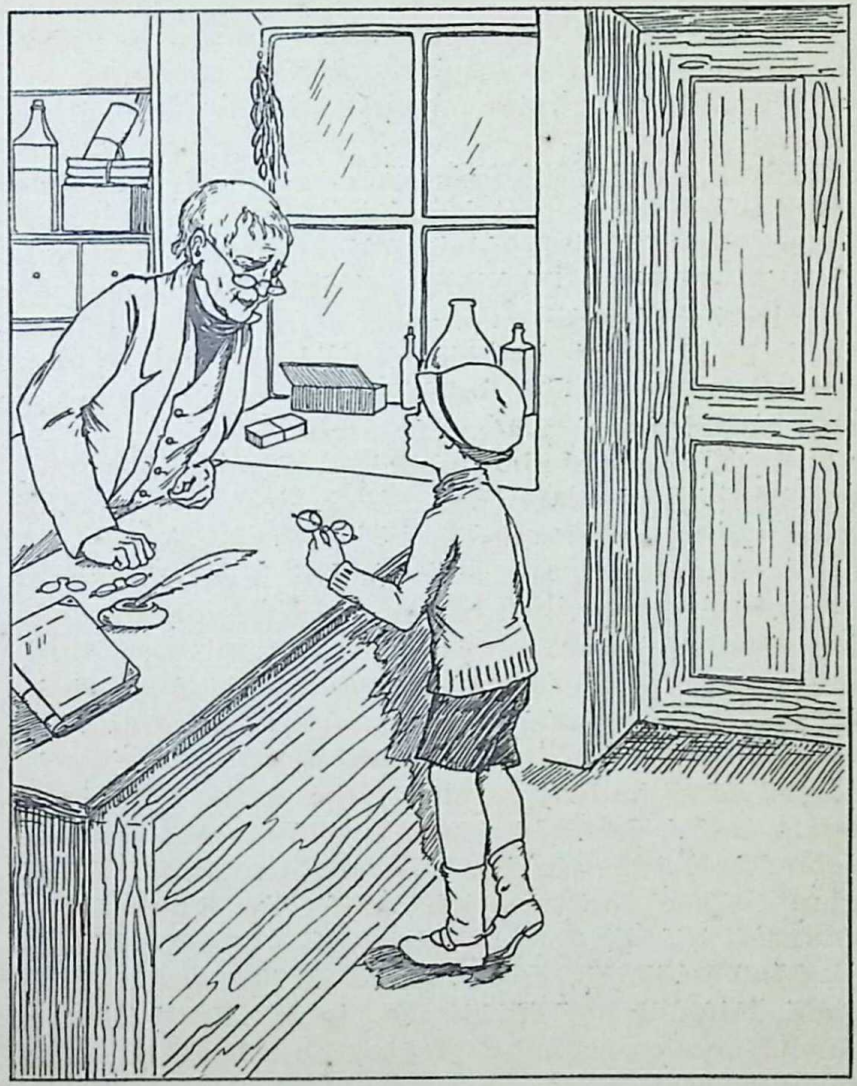
"Remove those spectacles at once, Jack; take them back to the old man who sold them to you, and he will tell you what to do. Good-bye! I will be with you a year to-night."

76. Jack took off the spectacles which had enabled him to see such wonders, opened the door softly, and stole up to his bed, where he slept soundly till the sun was high in the sky.

77. That morning his mother wondered why he was so drowsy; she did not disturb him, however, but let him sleep on. When he rose, dressed himself, and went downstairs, he did not mention his wonderful adventure to anyone.

78. After he had eaten a good breakfast, he set off to the spectacle shop, being much too late for school. He opened the door, stepped in, and was glad to see that the old man was behind the counter.

79. The shopkeeper looked very earnestly at Jack, but did not speak. So Jack said, "Please, Sir, I have brought back the spectacles for second sight."



"Please, Sir, I have brought back the spectacles for second sight."—*Page* 14.

Koviloor Acadamy

"Have you, my boy?" said the old man in an enquiring voice, as if he were expecting to hear more.

80. "I was with the fairies, last night," Jack went on to say; "and the fairy prince told me to bring these spectacles straight back to you." Then Jack told the man where he had been, and what he had seen.

81. When he had done, the spectacle-seller said to him, "The fairies are *my* friends, and would like to be *yours* as well. They know how you have thought about them, and dreamed about them; and it was they who told me to get you to buy the spectacles. That is why I put the card in the window, so that it might catch your eye; and I was very pleased when you came in and bought a pair."

82. "The prince said he would come back to me in a year," said Jack.

"Then he will keep his word; for fairies never break a promise," the old man assured him. "Come to me when the year is nearly up, and I will again lend you the magic spectacles. Here is your half-crown; put it back into your money-box; and if any of your friends wonder whether there are fairies on the heath, you can say now with certainty, 'There is no doubt about it.'"

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THE LITTLE BROWN MAN OF THE HILLS.

THE boy was tired. Poor little lad! he had been walking for miles and miles over hill and over dale to see if he could get work. His father was dead, and his mother was very poor. The boy lived with her in a hut at the foot of one of the high mountains of Norway; his name was Henrik.

2. Last night he had made up his mind that he would try to earn some money, so that his mother need not work so hard for their living.

3. He had set out that morning, full of hope that some farmer might want a boy to take charge of his cattle on the hills. But, so far, no one had needed him, as the farmers had lads of their own who would do that work.

4. Henrik was not only tired, but very hungry; so he opened a small bag which he carried over his shoulder, took out a slice of bread and butter, and ate it with great relish.

5. It was in the middle of summer, when the nights are light and warm; and as he had told his mother that he might not return that day, he now threw himself down upon the soft grass at his feet, and soon fell into a deep sleep.

6. He dreamed that it was night, that a bright full moon was gazing down at him, and that he

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was walking slowly past a fall of water, which came down from a great height, and roared and splashed as it fell. Suddenly he stopped, and he felt as if he could not move along any farther.

7. He gazed at the grand sight; and as he looked, he saw a woman, clad in a white dress, covered with gems, which shone and sparkled in the moonlight, as she came towards him. When she was quite near to him, her lips moved; and then her voice sounded like a silver bell.

8. She spoke only these five words: "Follow the Little Brown Man." And then a cloud seemed to come before his sight, and he saw her no more.

9. Next morning, when Henrik awoke, he could not get this dream out of his mind; indeed, the beautiful voice rang in his ears all day, and cheered him on his weary way.

10. The words "Follow the Little Brown Man" filled his thoughts, as he wandered from farm to farm, asking for work. But no one needed his help; so at last he made up his mind to return to his mother and tell her of his bad luck.

11. His heart was sad, as he thought of her careworn face; but he dared not go farther, lest she should think him lost. So, as the sun began to sink, he set out on his homeward journey, hoping to reach before night the spot where he had slept before.

12. His feet were sore, for the roads were

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rough and stony; but he plodded on until he came to the spot where he had dreamed his dream.

13. His bag was almost empty, but he ate what remained, took a drink from a running stream, then lay down, and was soon fast asleep.

Again he saw the lady covered with sparkling gems, and again he heard her speak the words, "Follow the Little Brown Man"; but this time she repeated them more loudly than before.

14. Just as she finished speaking, the moon was again hidden from sight; and the lady seemed to vanish into the spray of the splashing, dashing waterfall.

15. Henrik was soon awake, though it was quite early in the morning; he arose at once, and hurried on, because he knew his mother would be uneasy. As he neared home, he saw her waiting for him at the door; and her face lit up with pleasure, when she first caught sight of him. But all the joy died away, when she saw his sad face.

16. "Well, Henrik, have you not good news for me?" she said.

"No, mother, nobody seems to want a boy, and so I have just come back again to you," was Henrik's reply.

17. For an hour or two they sat up, talking, and wondering what next they should try.

At last the mother, who seemed quite worn out, said, "Well, Henrik, good-night. Let us

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hope that something will guide us; for I am getting old, and feel that I cannot work much longer."

18. The boy kissed her, and then sat still, gazing out of the window. Although the clock had just struck twelve, he could see quite a long distance along the road, for, at that season, it was scarcely dusk. And as he sat dreaming and nearly falling asleep, he felt a soft touch on his shoulder.

19. What do you think he saw, when he looked round? Behind him stood a little man with very large round eyes, and a very brown face; and he was dressed from head to foot in brown—a long brown coat, brown stockings, and brown shoes.

20. As you may well suppose, the boy was much startled, and said, "Well, little man, what is your wish?"

But the little man did not answer; he only shook his head, and with his right hand beckoned Henrik to follow him.

21. Many boys would have been afraid to obey such a strange-looking little person at such an hour, but Henrik feared nothing.

"Where will you take me?" he asked; but the stranger only shook his head, and again beckoned him to follow.

22. The boy opened the door and stepped out on to the road. As he did so, his thoughts went

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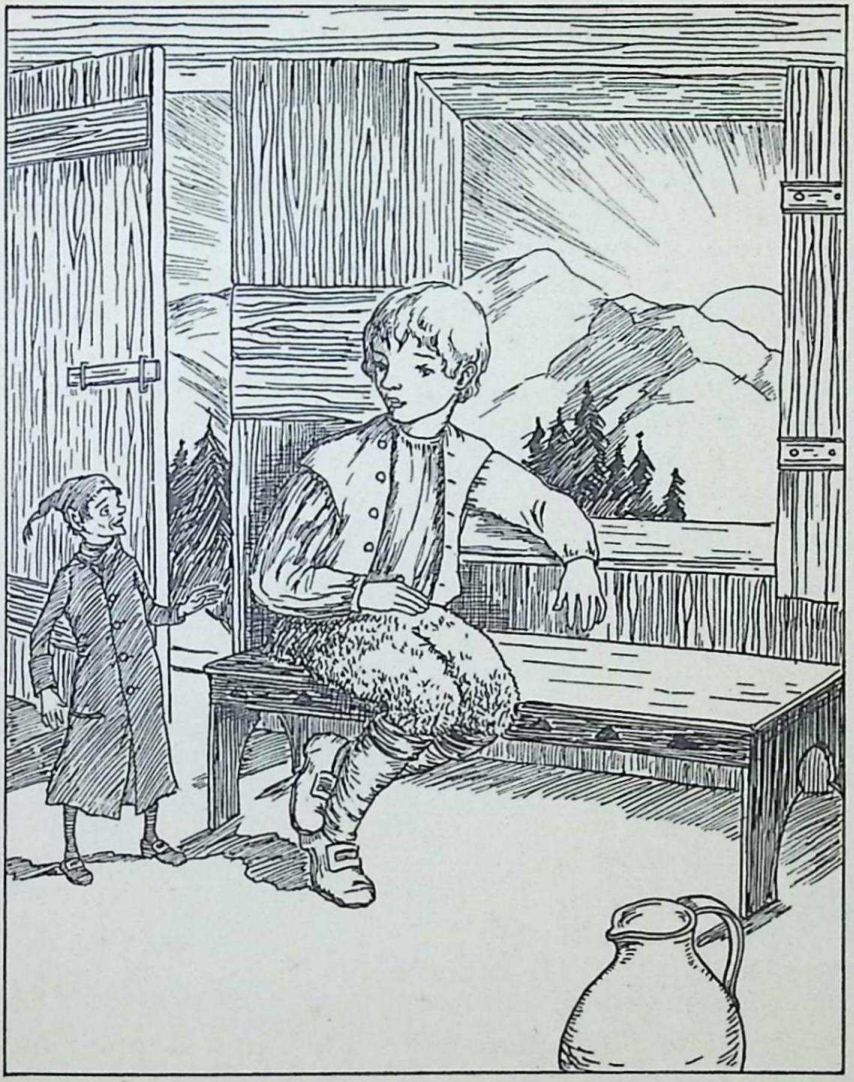

'Behind him stood a little man.'—*Page* 20.

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back to his dream and to the words of the beautiful lady, "Follow the Little Brown Man"; which he meant to do.

23. For some distance the road was long and straight, but at last it took a sharp turn; and then Henrik found it hard work, for the man walked quickly, turning round again and again to see if he were coming.

24. The boy often called out to him, but he still shook his head and beckoned him to follow on.

At length they came to a narrow and very rugged path; but on went the strange little man, and on went Henrik. This path led over a high bare cliff; and the lad grew quite giddy, when he looked at the deep abyss below.

25. They now reached a small dark cave; and this time, when the little man turned round, his eyes seemed to grow larger and brighter. He crept into the mouth of the cave, and, for a time, Henrik quite lost sight of him. Then he saw two bright stars shining through the darkness, and he knew that it was the little man turning to see if he still followed.

26. So he went down on his hands and knees, and crawled into the cave. He found that it led to a narrow passage, the sides of which were in easy reach of his hands.

27. On and on he crept into the darkness, which now became black as night. He was just

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able to raise his head, and he looked and looked, but no longer could he see the two stars beckoning him on.

Not a sound was to be heard except the drip, drip of water through the clefts in the rock.

28. If he could, Henrik would now have turned back, but the passage was so low and narrow that he was obliged to go on. His clothes were wet, his hands and knees were sore, and his heart was sinking within him, when, all of a sudden, he saw a flash of light which nearly blinded him; then he heard a roar like thunder, which nearly deafened him.

29. On looking about him, he found himself in a large and lovely cave, in the midst of which stood the beautiful lady of his dream. But the Little Brown Man was nowhere to be seen.

30. "Henrik!" and the voice fell like music on his ears, "you are a brave and good lad to have trusted me as you have done; you may rest here to-night, and to-morrow I shall tell you what you must do."

31. The floor of the cave was covered with thick dry moss, and Henrik was so tired, though so happy, that he threw himself down and soon fell asleep.

32. Next morning, when he awoke, and looked round, he could not at first make out where he was. But he very soon remembered; and after he had rubbed his eyes and stretched himself, he

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heard the voice he had learned to love, and the lady stood before him.

33. "You see those walls that are flashing with gems, Henrik. Now, if you can but break off one large piece and carry it home, you will find that it is worth its weight in gold."

"I will try," said he, "if you will but give me an axe with which to break it."

34. "That you must find for yourself, Henrik," said she; "and there is only one axe in the world which will do for this purpose."

"Tell me where to look, and I will get it," replied the boy.

35. "I am afraid," said she, "you will find that a very difficult task; for it is hidden away in one of the crevices you passed, when you were following the Little Brown Man, and he alone knows where it lies hidden. You must crawl back again along the dark passage, and feel in every crevice. It may take you days; but if you persevere, you are sure to find it."

36. "But my mother is poor," Henrik told the lady, "and she will be sad and anxious, if I do not return to her soon."

37. "You are a good boy," she answered, "to think of your mother, and care so much for her; but if you do as I ask, you will make her happy for the rest of her life. I will appear to her in a dream, as I did to you, and will set her mind at rest. But do not waste time, set out at once,

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and search well; for if you miss even *one* rift, you may miss the lucky axe."

38. When Henrik's mother awoke next morning, she looked about and called for him; but nowhere could he be seen or heard. She thought, however, that perhaps he had risen early, and gone off without telling her, for this he often did.

39. When evening came, and Henrik did not return, she walked far along the road, hoping to catch a glimpse of him. But, to her disappointment, he was nowhere to be seen. She returned to her little cottage; and, being very tired, she lay down on her couch, and, in spite of her fears, was soon asleep.

40. In her sleep she saw a lovely lady who came to her, laid her hand on her brow, and said kindly, "Fear not, Henrik is well, and will soon bring you joy. He is a good boy, and you have reason to be proud of such a son."

41. When the poor widow awoke next morning, she felt as if an angel had visited her with good tidings; and she tried to be cheerful, although her boy did not return. But when several days had passed by, and he was still a wanderer, her fears knew no bounds. She feared that he had been seized by some wild animal; for bears *had* been known to prowl about that countryside sometimes in the summer time.

42. But, the next night, she once more saw

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the angel visitor, who said, "Henrik is well, and will very soon bring you joy. Be of good cheer; you are a proud woman to be the mother of such a son."

43. In the meantime where do you think our hero was? He had dragged himself from the presence of the beautiful lady, and set off to crawl carefully along the dark and dreary passage. A small gleam of light was to be seen at the farthest end; but that was nothing to the great gleam of hope with which her words had filled him.

44. When he came to the first little crevice, he stretched his left hand in, but could feel nothing but the cold, cold water dripping through the rock. He crept on; and here the sides seemed quite smooth, with no cracks through which he could search for the axe. Then he came to many, now on his right side, and then on his left. He tried each one of them, but still found only the cold, cold water.

45. At last, on his right hand, he felt one rift larger than the rest, and, at the same time, he could hear much dashing of water. As the opening seemed quite wide and high, he tried to raise himself into it, for he was tired and almost numb with cold.

46. He once more stood upright, and was easier, but the noise of the falling water almost deafened him. He was feeling round this crevice,

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in every nook and corner, when suddenly, through the darkness, he saw two bright stars shining at him. He gazed at them as steadily as he could, but they seemed to go farther and farther away from him.

47. Then he guessed that this was the Little Brown Man come to help him to find the axe; so he followed on quickly. The change from creeping to walking was so pleasant, and made it so much easier to get along, that he soon overtook the little man; and he had no sooner done so than he felt a rope passed gently round his waist, and himself lifted off his feet right up the side of the rift.

48. He knew not how far he had gone, when his head struck something which jutted slightly out from the rock. Putting his hand up, he felt something move; when he grasped this firmly, it gave way, and he felt sure that now he held the lucky axe. Then he began gradually to descend, until, to his joy, his feet once more touched the ground. A gentle hand removed the rope, the gleaming eyes looked into his, he heard a deep sigh, and he was once more alone.

49. How to get back to the passage was his next thought. He groped his way along, holding the precious tool firmly in his hand. It was quite small, so that it was not very much in his way.

50. When he reached the entrance to the

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rift, he crept carefully along, for he feared lest he might do any injury to the little axe which was to make his fortune.

51. At last he saw again the flash of vivid lightning, heard the roar of loud thunder, and found himself once more in the Cave of Gems, and standing before its angel. He laid the precious axe at her feet, saying, "This I have found; now tell me what next I must do."

52. Lifting the axe high above his head, she said, "Now go to the spot which you think the brightest; then look straight before you, and strike. Be sure to take a good aim and strike hard. Whatever falls to the ground is yours; but, remember, you may strike only *once*."

53. Henrik gazed round; and, seeing one most dazzling point, he walked very slowly towards it. It seemed to jut out a little; so he looked carefully at it for some moments, and then struck with his axe. Immediately a large portion of the rock gave way, and at his feet lay a lump of dazzling brightness.

54. "That is yours, Henrik. Chip it carefully bit by bit, take the pieces to the nearest town, and there you will find a man called Hans, who will cut them for you into hundreds of precious gems."

55. "But how am I to get it out of this cave?" said Henrik sadly.

"Cross over to the other side. There you will

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find steps, leading down to a stream. You cannot see it, but you can hear it gently flowing onward to the daylight. Cast the stone into it, and then run back to me, as quickly as you can. You must still trust me, Henrik; for you know I have not failed you yet."

56. Our hero ran across the cave, carrying his precious load; and, on the other side, he saw some very steep steps leading downward. He stepped carefully on to the first step, then on to the second; after which, gaining confidence, he descended until he reached what he thought was a dark stream of water. With perfect trust he threw his treasure into it, and rushed back to the bright and beautiful cave.

57. "Now, Henrik, you must leave me," said the lady. "Go back through the dark passage; and, once more in the daylight world, run down the road over which you passed when led by the Little Brown Man. Then you will see a narrow stream flowing through a rift in the rock; and if you wait patiently a short while, you will see your lump of luck brought down the stream."

Henrik kissed her hand, looked once more into her beautiful face, and was gone.

58. He crept as quickly as he could along the passage towards the tiny gleam of light for which he was to aim. He reached it at last; and when he crawled out once more into daylight, he felt as if he had just awakened from a wonderful

Koviloor Acadamy

dream. However, he followed his instructions, and ran down the road until he came to a stream flowing slowly through a cleft in the hill.

59. He stood on the edge of this stream, looking anxiously into the rift; and at last, to his great joy, with the flowing current came the piece of rock which was to bring joy and happiness to himself and his mother.

60. When it reached him, he stooped down and seized it joyfully in both his hands. His feet scarcely touched the ground as he ran down the long road; and, as he neared the hut, his mother heard his footsteps and rushed to the door to greet her dear boy once more.

61. "Oh, Henrik, how glad I am to see you! But where have you been, and what have you been doing?"

He told her the whole story, of how the Little Brown Man came to him and led him to the beautiful lady of the cave. Next day he set to work to chip the lump of gems to pieces; and ere night fell, a thousand bits of precious stone lay before him.

62. He remembered that he had been told to seek out one called Hans, who would cut into shape, and polish, each of these gems from the wonderful cave. So next morning he set out for the nearest town, which was about three miles on the other side of the hill. He took with him a dozen of the chips; and, on reaching the town,

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he looked about him, but nowhere could he see anything to guide him in his search.

63. At last he came to a small, dark-looking little window, over which he could just see the word "Hans." The rest of the name had been worn off with age. He opened the low door, leading into what appeared to be a cellar; and from the farthest corner there came towards him an old, old man, bent with age, who asked what he could do for him.

64. Henrik told him his errand; and when the strange old man saw what he carried, his eyes lit up with delight. He did not ask any questions, but told our young friend that he was a lucky lad, and that, if he would leave the chips and return in a week, he would give him what would sell for a thousand pounds.

Henrik did as he was told, and made his way back to his mother, who was overjoyed when she heard his news.

65. The next few days went slowly by, for he was longing for the week to pass. At last the day arrived, on which he was to return to the old man in the cellar. He left home in high spirits, and ran along the road leading to the town.

66. When he reached the little dark cellar, and threw open the door, the old man was waiting for him. He carefully opened a small box which he held in his hand, and there lay twelve of the most beautiful diamonds!

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"If you will leave them with me a few days longer, Henrik, I will turn them into a thousand golden coins."

67. Our hero thought for a minute or two, and decided to do this. The next time he visited the cellar, the man placed in his hands a bag heavy with gold.

68. "Take that, and use it wisely," said the old man. "When the bag is nearly empty, come to me again and bring with you twelve more of the chips. I have taken what will repay me for my trouble. You have been to the magic cave of which we have heard, but which we have never been permitted to see."

69. Henrik now knew that his fortune was made; so he thanked the old man heartily and rushed home. On his way, he made up his mind that his lump of luck should not only be a blessing to his mother and himself, but should, through him, be the means of helping many whom he knew, and who were not likely to be as fortunate as he had been.

70. The news of his adventure soon spread amongst the hills; and many a poor woman and little child lived to bless the day on which Henrik set out to seek work, but, instead of finding work, found the beautiful lady and obeyed her command to "follow the Little Brown Man."

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